(d) whether districts like Barpeta, Goalpara and Majuli would get such a plan?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF NEW AND RENEWABLE ENERGY (SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR): (a) to (d) The Ministry of New and Renewable Energy is implementing several programmes to promote use of solar energy devices and systems in the country including Assam. The programmes are the Solar Photovoltaic Programme, Solar Photovoltaic Water Pumping Programme, Solar Lantern Programme, and Solar Thermal Energy Programme. On the basis of proposals received from the States agencies and the availability of funds the Ministry allocates targets to them.

In addition, under the remote Village Electrification programme unelectrified census villages are electrified through renewable energy systems or provided solar lighting, the proposals for which are considered by the Ministry on case to case basis.

During 2007-08 a total of 750 solar home lighting systems, 50 solar street lighting systems and 500 solar lanterns have been allocated to the State of Assam. In addition projects have also been sanctioned for electrification/lighting of 555 villages through solar energy systems.

There is no proposal to formulate any special scheme to provide solar energy systems in the remote villages of Assam. 2139 villages in Assam including those in Chhar areas have been identified by the State for coverage through renewable energy sources, including solar energy systems. No proposal has been received from the State for setting up renewable energy power plants in the districts of Barpetta, Goalpara and Majuli.

The Ministry does not prepare State-wise plans for setting up of solar energy systems in different States. The States submit proposals to the Ministry on the basis of the plans prepared by them.

Research and generation of solar energy

1789. PROF. P.J. KURIEN: Will the Minister of NEW AND RENEWABLE ENERGY be pleased to state:

(a) the total generation of solar energy in the country;

(b) the steps Government has taken to improve the generation and reduce the cost of generation;

(c) whether any incentive is given to private agencies for research and generation of solar energy; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF NEW AND RENEWABLE ENERGY (SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR): (a) A total of 33 grid interactive solar photovoltaic power plants have been installed in the country with financial support from the Government. These plants, with aggregate capacity of 2.12 Megawatt, are estimated to generate about 2.55 million units of electricity in a year. In addition, around 14.5 lakh decentralized off-grid solar photovoltaic systems aggregating about 125 Megawatt capacity have been installed in the country, which is capable of generating about 150 million units in a year. Further, a collector area of about 2.15 million square meter has been installed for solar water heating applications. The amount of energy generation depends on the use pattern of the system and climate of the place. Typically, a solar water heating system with 2 square meter of

collector area can generate energy equivalent to upto 1500 units of electricity when the system is used for about 300 days in a year.

(b) The Government has taken several measures to reduce the cost of solar energy systems, which include: (i) research and development to improve their performance and reduce the consumption of materials; (ii) subsidy on selected solar energy system; (iii) interest subsidy to provide soft loan to users and the manufacturers; (iv) concessional or nil import duty on some of the raw materials, components and products; (v) excise duty exemption; and (vi) 80% accelerated depreciation in the first year etc.

(c) and (d) All academic, research institutions and industries, including the private institutions, which are engaged in research in solar energy, are eligible to receive grant for undertaking R&D. In addition, expenditure on R&D by the private industries is eligible for deduction from profits under Income Tax Act.

Under a recently launched demonstration programme on grid interative solar power generation, private companies are eligible to get production based incentive for power fed to the grid from megawatt capacity solar powers plants set up on build now and operate basis in the country.

Proposal from any project developer with a maximum aggregate capacity of 5 MW, either through a single project or multiple projects of a minimum capacity of 1 MW each, would be considered under the programme. Preference would be given to the projects from the States where the State Electricity Reglatory Commission (SERCs) have announced or are in the process of announcing tariff for solar power.

For projects approved and commissioned by 31st December, 2009, the Ministry will provide generation based incentive up to Rs.12 per kWh for solar photovoltaic power and Rs.10 per kWh for solar thermal power after taking into account the tariff provided by the SERC or the utility.

Incentive schemes for solar power projects

1790. SHRI AMAR SINGH: Will the Minister of NEW AND RENEWABLE ENERGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether incentive schemes for solar power projects for generation of solar energy have been formulated; and

(b) if so, the sailent features thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF NEW AND RENEWABLE ENERGY (SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Recently the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy has announced a demonstration programme to support mega watt size grid interactive solar power generation porjects, up to a maximum capacity of 50 MW, in the country. Any registered company, as project developer, would be eligible to set up solar power projects on build, own and operate basis. Proposal from each project developer with a maximum aggregate capacity of 5 MW, either through a single project or multiple projects of a minimum capacity of 1 MW each, would be considered.

A maximum of 10 MW capacity solar power generation projects would be considered in a State. Preference would be given to the projects from the States where the State Electricity Regulatory Commission (SERCs) have announced or are in the process of announcing tariff for solar power.